Santa Clara Valley Water District

inside: **Where does our water come from?**



Local water

Groundwater and local surface water is the county's original source of water supply. Local rainfall and runoff flows into reservoirs for storage and blending with imported water. The water is released into creeks and ponds to augment natural percolation and maintain groundwater levels. Some of the local surface water is processed at drinking water treatment plants. The treated water is sold to local water retailers such as San Jose Water Company who use their own distribution systems to serve customers. Water pumped from the groundwater aquifer through wells is used by private well owners, farmers, and water retailers.



Imported water

Half of Santa Clara County's water supply comes from hundreds of miles away—first as snow or rain in the Sierra Nevada range of northern and eastern California, then as water in rivers that flow into Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta or directly to water conveyance systems. Often called "imported water," it is brought into the county through the complex infrastructure of the State Water Project, the federal Central Valley Project and San Francisco's Hetch Hetchy system.



Recycled water

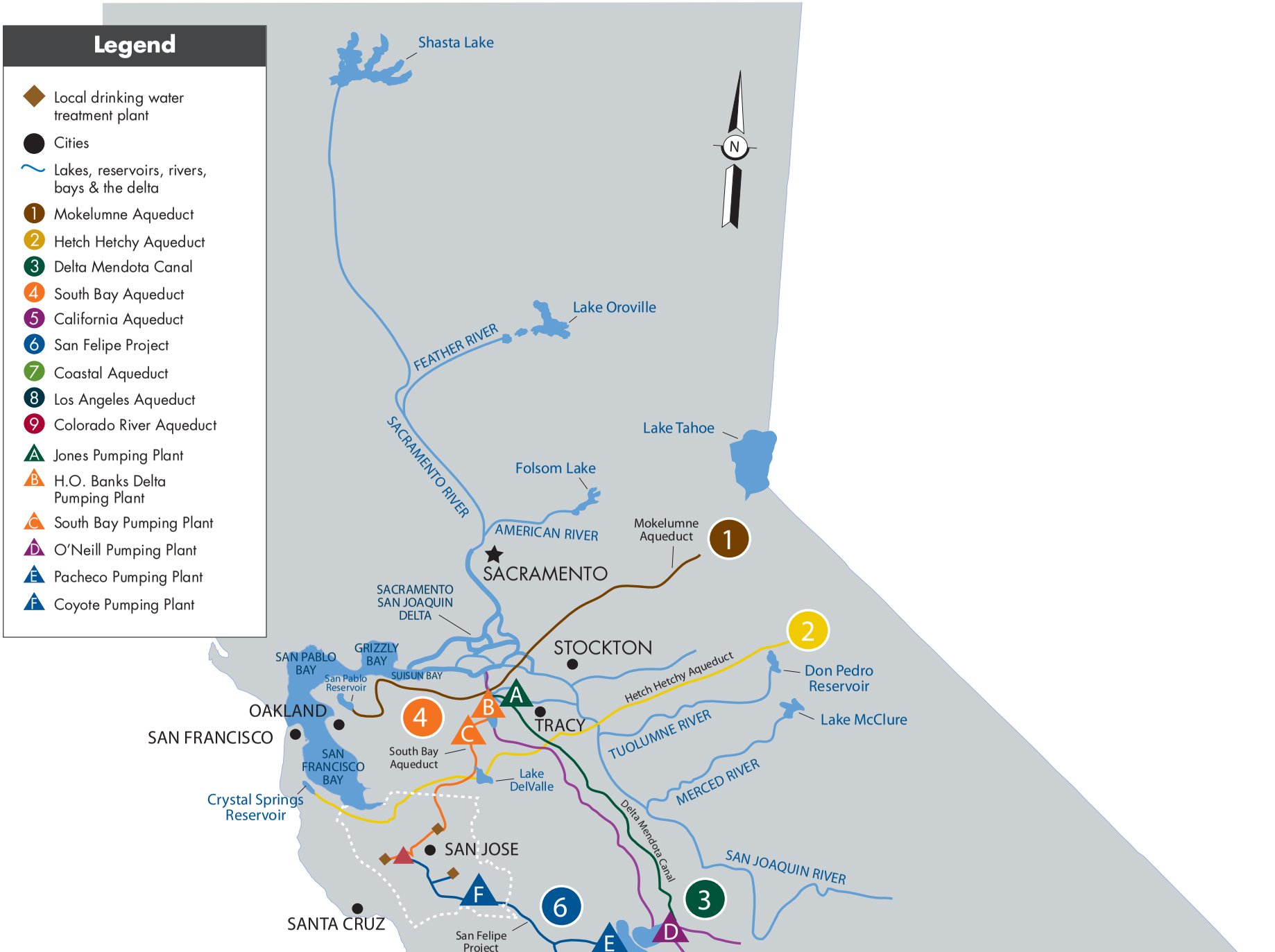
A small, but important and growing source of water is recycled water. Used primarily for irrigation, industry and agriculture, recycled water is wastewater that has been purified to meet strict standards set by the California Department of Health Services. Using recycled water helps conserve drinking water supplies, provides a dependable, drought-proof, locally-controlled water supply, reduces dependency on imported water and groundwater and helps preserve our saltwater and tidal habitat by reducing freshwater discharge to the bay.



Save water

Did you know that only less than 1 percent of all water on Earth is suitable for use by people? The rest is salt water, like the kind found in the ocean, or is permanently frozen. We can't drink it, wash with it or use it to water plants. Whether it's a wet year or a dry one, we must be careful not to waste this precious limited resource.

Where does our water come from?



Santa Clara County

by the numbers

Water supplies

30% local water

- **15%** natural groundwater
- **10%** from reservoirs to groundwater
- **5%** from reservoirs to drinking water treament plants

55% imported water

- **15%** through Delta to replenish groundwater
- **25%** through Delta to drinking water treatment plants
- **15%** from Hetch Hetchy system

5% recycled water

90%

10% savings needed

100%



Where does your water come from?

	Local water			Imported water			Other
	Natural groundwater	From reservoirs to replenish groundwater	From reservoirs to drinking water treatment plants	Thru Delta to replenish groundwater	Thru Delta to drinking water treatment plants	From Hetch Hetchy	Recycled
Alviso						•	•
Campbell	•	•	•	•	•		
Cupertino	•	•	•	•	•		
Gilroy	•	•		•			•
Los Altos	•	•	•	•	•		
Los Altos Hills	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Los Gatos	•	•	•	•	•		
Milpitas			•		•	•	
Monte Sereno	•	•	•	•	•		
Morgan Hill	•	•		•			
Mountain View	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Palo Alto						•	•
San Jose	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
San Martin	•	•		•			
Santa Clara	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Saratoga	•	•	•	•	•		
Sunnyvale	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

About the Santa Clara Valley Water District

The Santa Clara Valley Water District manages an integrated water resources system that includes the supply of clean, safe water, flood protection and stewardship of streams on behalf of Santa Clara County's 1.8 million residents. The district effectively manages 10 dams and surface water reservoirs, three water treatment plants, a state-of-the-art water quality laboratory, nearly 400 acres of groundwater recharge ponds and more than 275 miles of streams. We provide wholesale water and groundwater management services to local municipalities and private water retailers who deliver drinking water directly to homes and businesses throughout Santa Clara County.



On the cover:

1. Alamitos Groundwater Recharge Pond, San Jose
2. California Aqueduct
3. Recycled Water "purple pipe"
4. Save water for a better world



CONTACT US

For more information, contact **Customer Relations** at **(408) 630-2000**, or visit our website at valleywater.org and use our **Access Valley Water** customer request and information system. With three easy steps, you can use this service to find out the latest information on district projects or to submit questions, complaints or compliments directly to a district staff person.

Follow us on: /scvwd /valleywater /valleywater

To get eNews, email info@valleywater.org

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The Delta

Fast Facts

- 30 million+ = number of Californians who depend on the Bay-Delta watershed for all or part of their drinking water, including seven of nine Bay Area counties.
- 40% = Percentage of Santa Clara County's water supply conveyed through the Delta.
- 66% = Probability of major earthquake, Delta levee failure and water supply disruption in the next 50 years.
- 20 feet = Depth below sea level of central Delta "islands."
- 9% = Percentage of 1,100 miles of Delta levees that meet today's flood control standards.
- 47% = Percentage of California's water runoff that flows through the Delta watershed.
- 15% = Percentage of natural flows into the Delta watershed that is exported by CVP and SWP.
- 158 = Number of Delta flood events since 1900.
- $50 million+ = Cost to repair 2004 Jones Tract levee breach that occurred on a calm, summer day.





Images from the Delta

The Delta is where California's two longest rivers, the Sacramento and San Joaquin, meet and flow into San Francisco Bay to create the West Coast's largest estuary. The Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers receive snowmelt and rain runoff from more than 40 percent of California's land area, including the Sierra Nevada range in northern and eastern California.

A tremendously important ecosystem, the Delta supports more than 700 plant and animal species and is a major transit point along the Pacific Flyway, a key breeding area for numerous waterfowl and a migration route for salmon, steelhead and sturgeon. It is also a renowned recreational playground, a productive farming region and home to more than a half million people. Its more than 1,000 miles of levees protect vital Bay Area and state infrastructures, including gas and power lines, pipelines, highways and railroads.

The Delta is the hub of California's major water systems, the State Water Project (SWP) and the federal Central Valley Project (CVP) supply drinking water to two thirds of the state's population and irrigate millions of acres of the nation's most productive agricultural lands. Santa Clara County relies on these two water projects for 40 percent of its water supplies on average. Consequently, threats to the Delta ecosystem and these water projects pose problems not only to Southern California or farmers, but to Silicon Valley too.

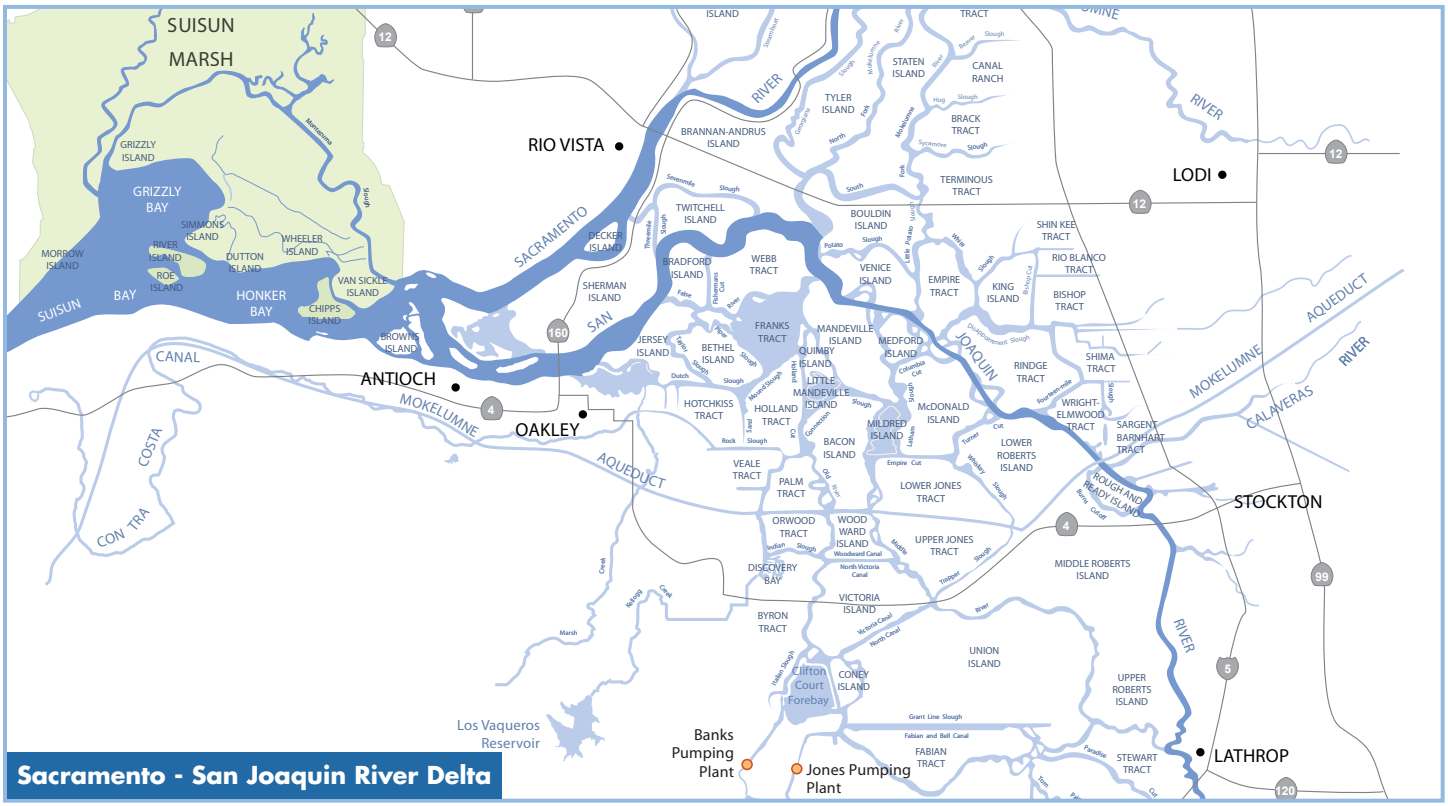
Invasive and non-native species, water pollution and wastewater discharges, unscreened water diversions, and changes in natural

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Where does our water come from? **The Delta**

Santa Clara Valley Water District

The Delta



flow patterns and hydrology threaten the health of the Delta's ecosystem and have contributed to the decline of several fish populations. And regulatory constraints to protect these threatened fish species have reduced the reliability of the county's SWP and CVP water supplies.

Catastrophic levee failure is also a growing threat. The Public Policy Institute of California, a nonpartisan think-tank, estimates there is a 66 percent chance of major levee failure in the Delta within the next 50years. A major levee failure could shut down the SWP and CVP Delta pumps for six to 18 months, depending on when and where it occurred, severely impacting Santa Clara County and the California economy.

Climate change scenarios predict even greater threats in the future. Earlier snow melts will put additional strain on the Delta levees. Rising sea level also threatens levee stability and will allow more salty ocean water to intrude into the Delta. This increased salinity may affect fish populations and will increase the cost to treat the water for use in Santa Clara County and elsewhere.

To address these risks, the water district is actively working with others on the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP), a promising effort aimed at the dual goals of improving Delta ecosystem health and water supply reliability. BDCP participants include the Department of Water Resources, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, state and federal fishery agencies, SWP and CVP contractors, and environmental organizations. The conservation strategy will include measures to restore habitat, reduce stressors such as invasive species and contaminants and improve water conveyance through the Delta. The BDCP will also secure long-term Endangered Species Act permits for SWP and CVP operations.

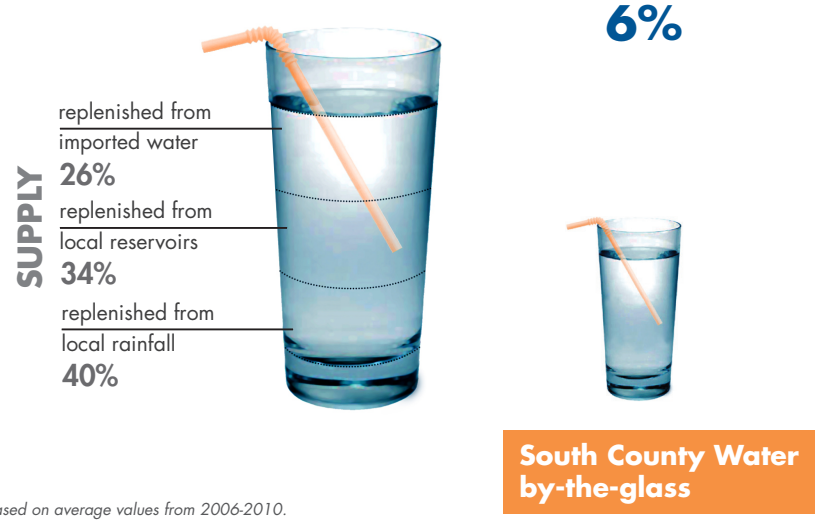
The fisheries conservation community generally agrees that a properly operated, new isolated conveyance facility will substantially benefit certain listed species compared to the existing system. An isolated conveyance facility would divert water through five new intakes along the Sacramento River before it enters the Delta and convey it directly to the SWP and CVP pumping plants in the south Delta. At the same time, a new isolated facility equipped with state-of-the-art fish screens would help achieve a more reliable water supply for Santa Clara County.

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South County

Fast Facts

- Groundwater pumping in the Coyote Valley and Llagas Subbasin increased more than 30 percent over the last 20 years.
- Over the past ten years, annual groundwater pumping in South County has averaged 54,000 acre-feet. One acre-foot of water serves two families of five for one year, on average.
- On average, the amount of groundwater pumped from the subbasins is almost two times the amount that nature replenishes.
- On average, water captured in South County reservoirs represents 30 percent of the water used to recharge the Llagas Subbasin.
- Over the last 10 years, the average district recharge to the Llagas Subbasin was 24,000 acre-feet per year. Of that amount, nearly half was imported water.
- When the water district began recharging imported water in the Llagas Subbasin at the start of the 1987-1992 drought, groundwater levels began to recover despite the drought conditions.
- Without the managed recharge program, South County would have faced a severely diminished water supply.



Based on average values from 2006-2010.

South County (Zone W-5 in the water district's Water Utility Enterprise) communities depend on groundwater from the Coyote Valley (part of the Santa Clara Subbasin) and the Llagas Subbasin for their water supply. The water district actively manages these subbasins to augment the supply nature provides and to protect them from contamination or other threats that would jeopardize this resource.

Three main sources replenish groundwater in the Coyote Valley and Llagas Subbasin:

- Deep percolation of local rainfall
- Water captured and stored in local reservoirs, which the water district releases to creeks and recharge ponds for managed recharge
- Water imported from Delta, which the water district also releases to creeks and recharge ponds for managed groundwater recharge

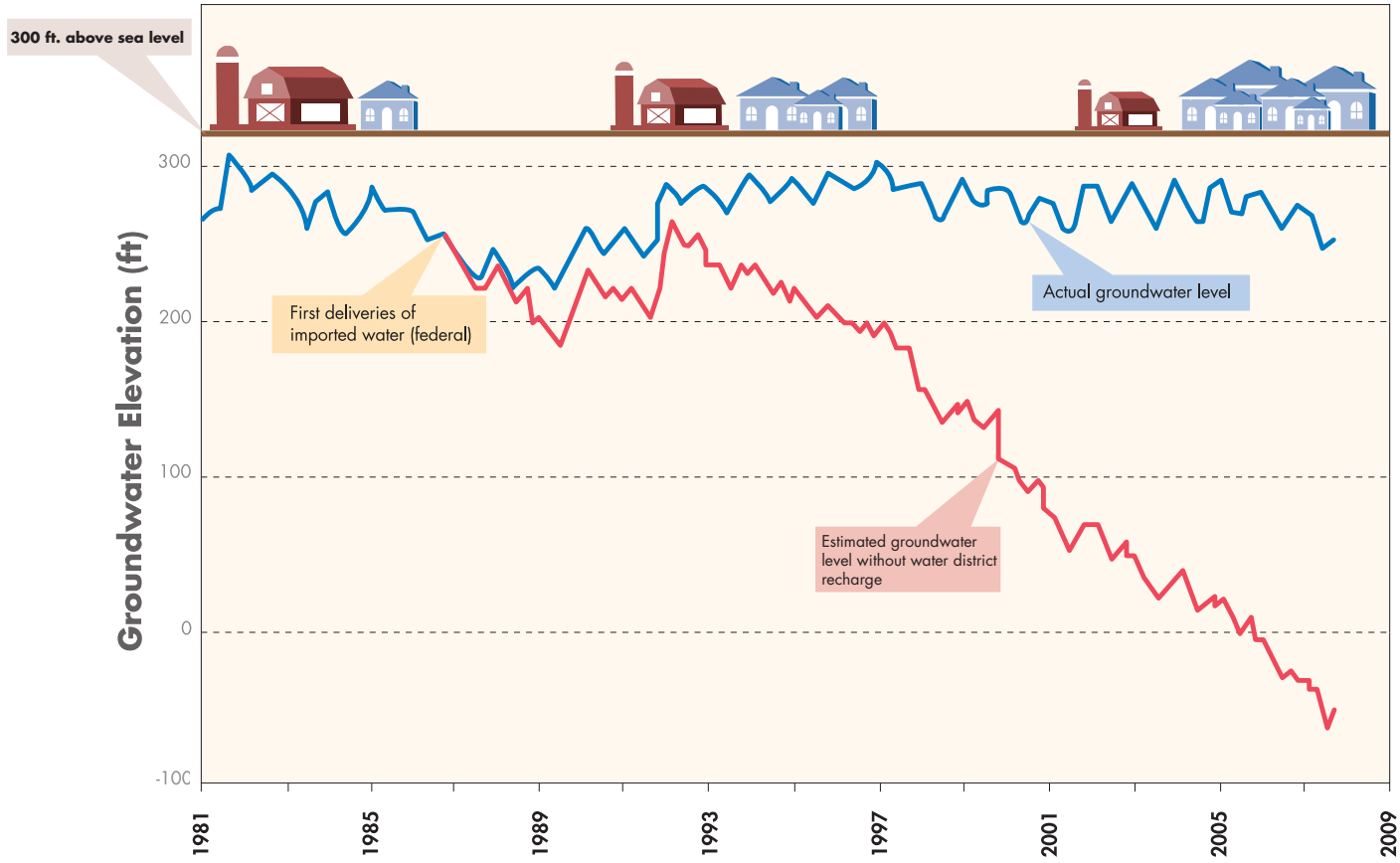
Residents in Coyote, San Martin, Morgan Hill and Gilroy use a mix of these three groundwater sources. Without a managed recharge program that includes both local surface water and water imported through the Delta, these subbasins could not meet South County's water needs.

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Where does our water come from? **South County**

Santa Clara Valley Water District

South County



Natural groundwater recharge from rainfall is no longer sufficient as perhaps 50 years ago.

Through the water district's recharge programs, using both local and imported water sources, overdraft of the groundwater subbasins has been avoided. Groundwater levels in South County have been kept at higher levels than they would have been otherwise, increasing water supply reliability and reducing the amount of energy needed to pump the water out. The water district's water conservation and recycling programs also reduce demand on the groundwater subbasins.

The water district's groundwater management programs have also helped reduce the impact of groundwater contamination from perchlorate and other contaminants. This is an additional benefit to Morgan Hill, Gilroy and other South County areas.

In addition to programs to increase supplies, the water district also has programs to address the numerous threats to groundwater quality. Leaking underground fuel tanks, industrial spills, urban runoff, septic systems, poorly managed agricultural operations and other sources can pollute groundwater, making it costly to treat or even unusable. The restoration of contaminated groundwater can take years, decades or longer. Prevention is key to groundwater protection.

Groundwater may be out of sight, but shouldn't be out of mind. Not only is groundwater essential to meeting our water needs, but stored groundwater is also our best insurance against drought or other water supply disruptions. This storage enables us to save water during wet years to use during droughts or other emergencies. Groundwater management has gotten us through past droughts and the water district's programs to protect and augment groundwater will help ensure water is available for future generations as well.

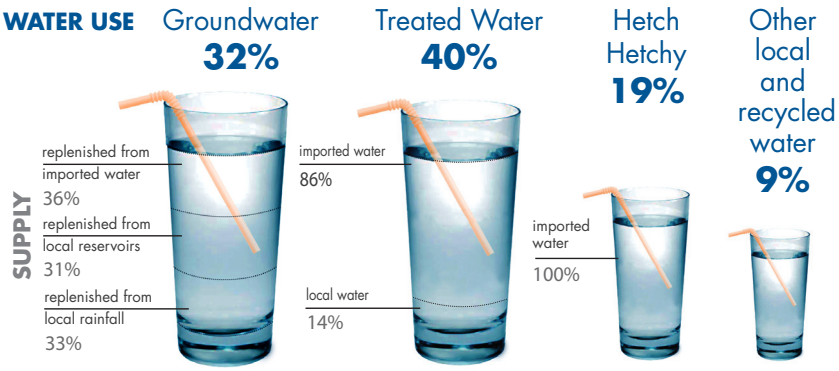
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North County

Fast Facts

- The water district directly replenished more than 56,000 acre-feet of water in North County in 2011.
- The water district sells treated water to seven of the water retailers in North County: California Water Services Company, San Jose Water Company and the cities of Mountain View, Sunnyvale, Santa Clara, Milpitas,and San Jose.
- Eight local water retailers purchase Hetch-Hetchy water from the San Francisco Water Department, to the tune of about 60,000 acre-feet per year.
- Irrigation and industrial users in North County used about 13,000 acre-feet of recycled water in 2011, water that otherwise would have come from drinking water supplies.
- Groundwater use in North County can vary significantly. Before the water district completed its third water treatment plant, annual groundwater pumping in the North County was more than 170,000 acre-feet.
- Over the past ten years, annual groundwater pumping has averaged about 95,000 acre-feet.

North County Water by-the-glass



Based on average values from 2006-2010.

When you turn on the tap, the water that flows might have been captured in one of our local reservoirs, imported from the Sierra Nevada Mountains or the Delta, or pumped from the aquifers beneath your feet. All these sources work together in an integrated way, meaning that regardless of where that water originated, you benefit from the variety of sources of water and activities managed by the water district and its local water retailers.

The Santa Clara Valley has relied on groundwater for drinking water, businesses and agriculture needs since 1854. By 1921, the Valley had pumped far more water than was naturally replenished, resulting in steeply declining groundwater elevations and permanent land subsidence, the broad sagging of the land surface over many miles. This resulted in increasing flood impacts to the Valley and caused saline water from the bay to flow inland, contaminating shallow groundwater. County voters formed the water district in 1929 to recharge the aquifers with water to counterbalance pumping, maintain the supply of groundwater and prevent further land subsidence. The area from Mountain View, Sunnyvale, Santa Clara and north San Jose has experienced permanent land subsidence, with the ground surface in downtown San Jose dropping about 13 feet.

The water district captures surface water in ten local reservoirs and uses it to recharge the groundwater aquifers through water district recharge facilities, including recharge ponds and creeks.

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Where does our water come from? **North County**

Santa Clara Valley Water District

North County

- All the water retailers in North County depend on groundwater, although the cities of Palo Alto and Milpitas only use it as a backup supply.
- Water district conservation programs saved an estimated 49,000 acre-feet in North County in 2011. Roughly 34,000 customers benefited from water district conservation programs in North County in FY2011 (including rebates, give-aways, surveys and other direct installation programs).



Camden and Oka Recharge Ponds, Campbell, CA

The water district replenishes groundwater with local and imported water at many recharge facilities.

Although the water from these reservoirs met the needs of the growing population for a time, imported water has supplemented local sources since the 1950s. The San Francisco Water Department, which sells Hetch-Hetchy water to several local water retailers, first brought imported water to the county. Since the 1960s, the water district has used imported water from Sierra Nevada Range flows through the Delta both for groundwater recharge and as the primary source of water for our three water treatment plants.

In addition to the treated water sold by the water district, some San Jose Water Company customers receive local water captured and treated by San Jose Water Company.

The groundwater subbasin ties all these supplies together, allowing savings of excess water in wet years for when it's needed in dry years. When surface supplies are plentiful, we rely more heavily on those supplies and thus help groundwater to recover, as if that water had been directly deposited in the groundwater aquifers. This idea of using another source when possible to benefit groundwater users is sometimes called "in-lieu" recharge. In this way, water conservation can be thought of as a supply, since the water saved is available for us to use in other years.

Without the coordinated management of the groundwater subbasin and surface water (both local and imported), there would not be enough water to serve the homes and businesses in the county, especially in dry years, and the local economy would suffer. Without water district recharge, imported water deliveries, treated water and water use efficiency programs, the groundwater subbasin would be overdrafted, resulting in declining groundwater levels, wells running dry and additional permanent land subsidence. This would increase the demand on other sources, impacting even those not using groundwater directly. No single source of water in the county can meet all our needs. The water district uses all of the various sources of water together to ensure a reliable clean water supply for all water users in North County.

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Imported Water

Fast Facts

- 55% = Percentage of Santa Clara County's water supply imported from the Bay-Delta watershed.
- 40% directly through the Delta and 15% from the Hetch-Hetchy System.
- 7 of 9 Bay Area counties rely on the Bay-Delta watershed for all or some of their water supply (Alameda, Contra Costa, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Solano).

The water district is unique as the only major contractor of both the State Water Project (SWP) and Central Valley Project (CVP):

- 100,000 acre-feet = SWP contract amount
- 152,500 acre-feet = CVP contract amount
- $44 million = Average annual cost of SWP and CVP imported water.
- Six cities in Santa Clara County receive imported water directly from the Hetch-Hetchy System.
- 60,000 acre-feet = normal year Hetch-Hetchy deliveries to Santa Clara County.
- SWP's Oroville Dam is the tallest dam in the United States.
- CVP's San Luis Reservoir is the largest offstream reservoir in the world (2 million acre-feet).
- 1 acre-foot = enough water to meet the needs of two families of five for a year.



California Aqueduct

The abundance of crops and fruit and nut orchards in Santa Clara County during the early 20th century created a great need for water in this "Valley of Heart's Delight."

But even then, local rainfall could not replenish groundwater basins fast enough to meet demand. In parts of San Jose, the pumping of so much water actually caused the ground to sink.

To prevent further land subsidence and secure the region's long-term water future, voters in 1929 approved the creation of a water conservation district, known today as the Santa Clara Valley Water District. In the 1960's, the county looked outside its borders for the water it would need to meet booming population growth and economic development as it transitioned into "Silicon Valley." In 1965, deliveries began from the State Water Project (SWP) through the South Bay Aqueduct. In 1977, the water district signed a contract for water from the federal Central Valley Project (CVP) and those deliveries began from San Luis Reservoir in 1987.

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Where does our water come from? **Imported Water**

Santa Clara Valley Water District℠

Imported Water

Today, it surprises many local residents to learn that, like Southern California, the San Francisco Bay Area depends on the Delta watershed for much of its water supply. Rainfall and snowmelt from the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range, flowing through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, supplies half of the water used in Santa Clara County in an average year. Many are also unaware that most of the water for both San Francisco and Oakland would also flow through the Delta if it were not diverted around the Delta in aqueducts.

Imported supplies are an integral part of the water district's water management, which also includes local supplies, conservation and recycling.

Protection of the county's imported water interests is a key priority. As the only major contractor of both the SWP and CVP, the water district plays a very unique role, working with other SWP and CVP contractors to ensure the delivery, reliability and cost-effectiveness of Santa Clara County's imported water supplies today and into the future.

Santa Clara County

by the numbers

Water supplies

30% local water

- 15% natural groundwater
- 10% from reservoirs to groundwater
- 5% from reservoirs to drinking water treatment plants

55% imported water

- 15% thru Delta to replenish groundwater
- 25% thru Delta to drinking water treatment plants
- 15% from Hetch Hetchy system

5% recycled water

90%

10% savings needed

100%

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Groundwater

Fast Facts

- Natural groundwater recharge hasn't been enough to sustain the groundwater subbasins for more than a century. On average, the amount of groundwater pumped is double or more the amount that nature replenishes.
- Each year, groundwater subbasins yield approximately 150,000 acre-feet of pumped water. (One acre-foot is approximately 325,000 gallons or enough water for two families for one year.)
- The groundwater subbasins can store more than twice as much water as all the county's reservoirs combined. We can store more water beneath our feet than what is used throughout the county in a year.
- The water district's recharge programs use more than 90 miles of local creeks and more than 300 acres of ponds to replenish groundwater.
- The groundwater subbasins filter and transmit more than 150 million gallons per day of water, more than the water district's largest water treatment plant.



1929

Groundwater is water found in aquifers, geological formations below the ground surface. Water seeps through the surface of the earth in much the same way that water saturates a sponge, to fill the cracks and pores of sand and gravel layers beneath our feet. The Santa Clara Valley overlies an aquifer system with two subbasins: the Santa Clara Subbasin in the north and the Llagas Subbasin, which extends from Morgan Hill south to Gilroy.

Local communities have relied on groundwater since the 1850s, when they first drilled wells to supply water to residents, agriculture and businesses. By 1921, with far more water being pumped than naturally replenished, groundwater levels declined and land subsidence, the broad sagging of the land surface over many miles, occurred. Mountain View, Sunnyvale, Santa Clara and north San Jose experienced permanent land subsidence, with the ground surface in downtown San Jose dropping about 13 feet.

Santa Clara County voters formed the water district in 1929 to recharge the subbasins with water to counterbalance pumping, maintain the supply of groundwater and prevent land subsidence. Because subsidence changes the elevation of the land surface, it can cause serious and costly problems, including flooding, saltwater

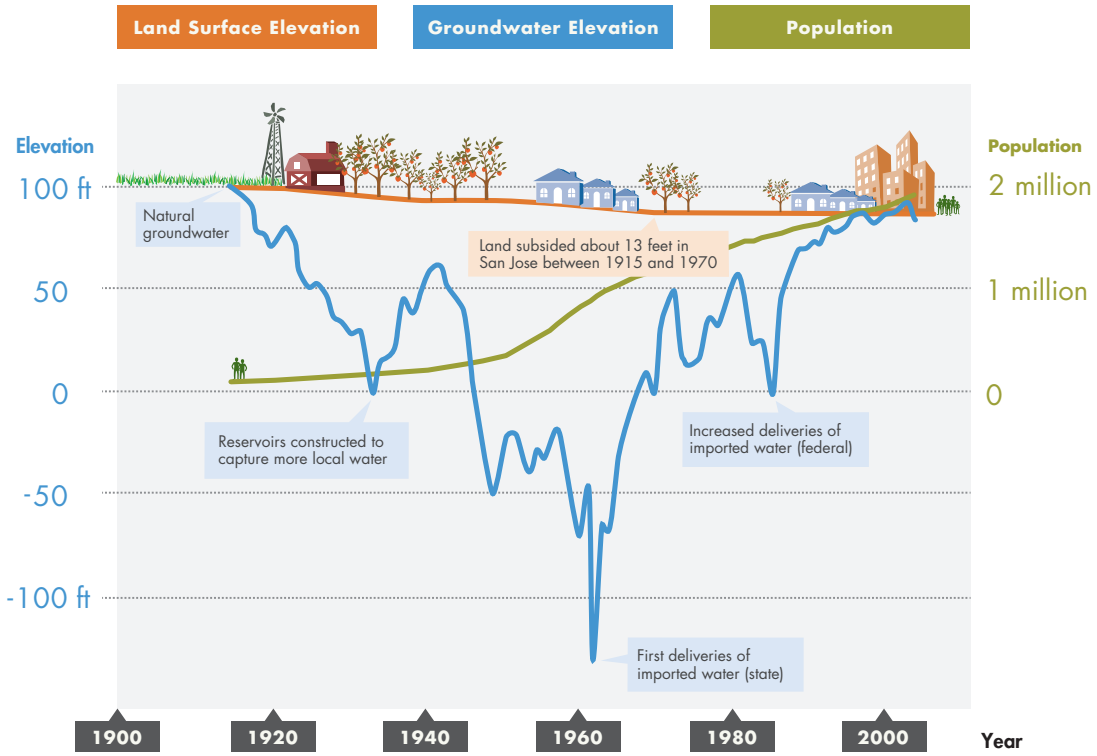
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Where does our water come from? **Groundwater**

Santa Clara Valley Water District

Groundwater

This chart illustrates how district recharge programs, imported water deliveries, and treated water programs have all dramatically contributed to a sustainable water supply.



A graphic representation not intended as a technical exhibit.

intrusion and damage to underground utilities such as sewer systems. Subsidence that occurred in the county prior to the 1970s caused millions in damage and highlighted the need for flood protection programs.

The water district actively manages the groundwater subbasins through programs to increase the supply nature provides and to protect them from contamination or other threats that would jeopardize this essential local resource.

Three main sources directly replenish groundwater in Santa Clara County:

1. Deep percolation of local rainfall
2. Water captured and stored in local reservoirs, which the water district releases to creeks and recharge ponds for managed recharge
3. Water imported from the Delta, which the water district also releases to creeks and recharge ponds for managed groundwater recharge

Just as important to the groundwater subbasins are water district programs like treated water deliveries, water recycling and water conservation. They indirectly help keep groundwater elevations from plummeting and the land from subsiding by reducing demands on the subbasins. By meeting needs otherwise met by groundwater, we can consider these programs "in-lieu recharge," as if the groundwater subbasins had been recharged by that amount. These programs are essential to meet the county's water needs now and into the future. The chart above illustrates the water district's dramatic contribution to a sustainable groundwater supply through direct recharge programs, imported water deliveries and treated water programs.

In addition to programs to increase supplies, the water district also has programs to address the numerous threats to groundwater quality. Leaking underground fuel tanks, industrial spills, urban runoff, septic systems, poorly managed agricultural operations and other sources can pollute groundwater, making it costly to treat or even unusable. The restoration of contaminated groundwater can take years, decades or longer. Prevention is key to groundwater protection.

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Agriculture

Fast Facts

- The County Agriculture Commissioner estimates that the total gross value of Santa Clara County agriculture in 2008 was about 250 million dollars.
- While agriculture uses less than 1 percent of the water used in North County, nearly half of South County water is used for agriculture. Over 90 percent of this need is met by groundwater, although some agricultural users receive surface water directly from water district facilities and some receive recycled water.
- Many agricultural users in the San Joaquin Valley and elsewhere have seen their water supplies cut by 90 percent in 2009. Meanwhile, the water district has asked its water users to reduce water use by only 15 percent.
- The water district has kept agricultural rates less than 25 percent of non-agricultural rates since 1990. Agricultural users are currently charged $16.50 per acre-foot for water. Non-agricultural groundwater users pay $275 per acre-foot and $520 per acre-foot in South County and in North County, respectively.
- An acre foot of water is typically used by two families of five in a year.



Cucumber crop in Gilroy, CA

Santa Clara County, the one-time "Valley of Heart's Delight" still has pockets of agriculture in this largely urbanized area. Agriculture brings jobs and dollars to the valley and provides the public with large areas of open space and access to locally-produced agricultural products. The water district's actions to replenish the groundwater basin ensure that farmers have a reliable, stable water supply. Our long-standing policy of including an open-space credit in the agricultural water rate structure provides local farmers with one of the lowest rates in California.

Local communities have relied upon groundwater since the 1850s, when they first drilled wells to supply water to residents and agriculture. In 1913, a group of farmers asked the federal government for relief from the increased cost of pumping due to declining groundwater levels. In 1919, the Farm Owners and Operators Association presented a resolution to the county board of supervisors expressing strong opposition to the waste resulting from flowing artesian wells and raising the issue of building dams to supplement existing water supplies. By 1921, nature could not replenish the water being pumped, resulting in steep drops in groundwater levels and land subsidence, the broad sagging of the land surface over many miles. County voters formed the Santa Clara Valley Water Conservation District in 1929 to recharge the North County aquifer to counterbalance pumping and maintain the supply of groundwater while preventing land subsidence.

As South County also experienced significant declines in groundwater levels, in 1938, South County voters approved the formation of the South Santa Clara Valley Water Conservation District, later renamed the Gavilan Water District in 1980. The Gavilan Water District built two reservoirs, Uvas and Chesbro,

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Where does our water come from? **Agriculture**

Santa Clara Valley Water District SM

Agriculture

to recharge South County aquifers. Local water supplies, including recharge from these reservoirs, were not enough and groundwater elevations continued to fluctuate. South County voters approved a merger with the larger Santa Clara Valley Water District in 1987, resulting in the integrated water supply management of the county's reservoirs and groundwater subbasins and the delivery of imported water into South County.

Most agricultural users in South County rely primarily on groundwater from the Coyote and Llagas Subbasins for their water supply. The water district actively manages these subbasins to augment the supply nature provides and to protect them from contamination or other threats that would jeopardize this resource.

Three main sources replenish the groundwater in the Llagas and Coyote Subbasins:

1. Deep percolation of local rainfall
2. Water captured and stored in local reservoirs, which the water district releases to creeks and recharge ponds for managed recharge
3. Water imported from Delta, which the water district also releases to creeks and recharge ponds for managed groundwater recharge

District programs and services that help improve irrigation efficiency include:

- Funding for Santa Clara County Farm Bureau's Irrigation Efficiency Program;
- Maintaining a system of weather stations to provide growers with irrigation scheduling data to reduce water use;
- Hosting a web page that provides reference crop water use data to help growers more efficiently irrigate crops;
- Providing two website calculators to assist growers in using California Irrigation;
- Managing (CIMIS) data to calculate crop irrigation requirements;
- Conducting presentations to growers on irrigation scheduling and efficiency.

Natural groundwater recharge from rainfall is no longer sufficient as it was 75 years ago. The water district's recharge programs, using both local and imported water sources, have helped avoid overdraft of the groundwater subbasins and kept groundwater levels at higher and more stable levels than they would have been otherwise. This increases water supply reliability and reduces costs as well owners use less energy to pump the water.

Also important to agricultural water users are water district programs that indirectly help keep groundwater elevations from dropping by reducing demands on the subbasins: water recycling and water conservation. In addition to benefitting all users of groundwater by reducing pumping demand, these programs also directly benefit the participants. The water district conducts growers meetings and provides technical assistance to help growers increase irrigation efficiency. The water district funds a program implemented by the Farm Bureau to provide growers intensive training in irrigation system efficiency and irrigation management. These programs help growers save water and money, and also help them comply with non-point source discharge regulations.

At a time when agricultural water users in the Central Valley and elsewhere in California are seeing rapidly dropping groundwater elevations and significant cutbacks to water deliveries, agricultural water users in Santa Clara County experience a reliable, stable supply at an affordable price.

How does the agricultural rate compare?

Agency	Ag $/AF	Non-Ag $/AF	Non-Ag $/AF
San Benito Groundwater (Quality issues)	$1.50	$21.50	7%
Modesto ID Untreated SW (Minimum take = 15AF)	$9.00	N/A	
SCVWD South Groundwater	$16.50	$275.00	6%
Merced ID Untreated SW	$18.25	N/A	
SCVWD South Untreated SW	$28.25	$286.75	10%
Merced ID Groundwater	$30.00	N/A	
Lost Hills Untreated SW	$91.00 to $141.00	N/A	
Zone 7 Untreated SW	$97.00	$900.00	11%
Westlands WD Pressurized	$112.40	$409.56	38%
San Benito Pressurized	$121.05	$196.05	62%
MWD Untreated SW	$482.00	$620.00	73%

SW: surface water

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